Deafness and Hard of Hearing 3

National Data on Deafness and Hard of Hearing

The National Institute on Deafness and other Communication Disorders (NICCD) labels hearing loss as one of the most prevalent chronic health conditions in the U. S., affecting people of all ages, ethnic groups, and socioeconomic levels. NICCD estimates about 12,000 children born in the U.S. each year have a hearing loss, which is about three in every 1,000 births, making it the most common of all birth defects. The National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management (NCHAM) estimates about 33 babies are born profoundly deaf every day. Of these children, an estimated 90 percent have parents who are not deaf or hard of hearing.

Beginning in the early 1990s awareness of the need for newborn hearing screening led many states to enact programs requiring universal testing. By the late 1990s there was a significant change in the number of babies identified at birth with hearing loss, compared to previous years when only high-risk infants were tested. This has resulted in early intervention for many babies. Babies can be fitted with amplification before they are a month old. NCHAM reports that children who receive early intervention make dramatic progress and are more successful in school than children whose hearing loss is identified and who receive intervention later. With appropriate family-based intervention, normal language and cognitive and social development are likely.

Wisconsin Data on Deafness and Hard of Hearing

Wisconsin, along with many other states, has enacted a universal newborn hearing screening (UNHS) program that tests hearing levels before a baby leaves the hospital. In Wisconsin, this program is managed by the Wisconsin Sound Beginnings, within the Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS). Close to 100 percent of hospital birthing centers and many home birth midwives administer the hearing screenings.

In 2006 about 3 percent of all school aged children in Wisconsin had a significant hearing loss. The Department of Public Instruction's (DPI) 2004 data identified 2,252 with a hearing loss. The majority of these students attend schools in their local districts, and approximately 6 percent attend the Wisconsin School for the Deaf in Delavan.

A 2004 survey of teachers of children who are deaf or hard of hearing indicated that 70 percent of these students are hard of hearing and 30 percent are deaf. Approximately 41 percent of all these students use sign language to communicate. Recent advances in technology have resulted in more students starting school with cochlear implants. The percentage of students with cochlear implants who use sign language as their primary means of communication dropped from 90 to 44 percent.

DPI data indicates the percentage of students who are deaf or hard of hearing and have additional disabilities (other than speech and language) has remained steady at about 37 percent annually. This data reflects the need for staff working with these students to have training in other areas, in addition to their specialization in deafness. The number of these students who are considered to be gifted and talented also has remained steady at 4 percent.

About 11 to 12 percent of students with a hearing loss come from homes where English is not the first language, primarily Spanish, Hmong, and German. The use of Spanish as the first language is consistent with the rise in the general Hispanic population in Wisconsin. Hmong families have the highest rate of deafness for children of all minority groups, and many of the families who speak German at home are Amish.

In Wisconsin, students who are deaf or hard of hearing participate in the Wisconsin

For More Information:

National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management. *Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Fact Sheet.* Logan, Utah: Utah State University.

National Institute on Deafness and Hard of Hearing (NIDCD). www.nidcd.nih.gov

U.S. Department of Heath and Human Services. The Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program (EHDI) Program, Washington DC. www.cdc.gov/ncbddd.ehdi

Knowledge and Concepts Examinations (WKCE) for reading, language arts, math, science, and social studies. The results of the testing for students who are deaf and hard of hearing indicated reading scores range from 43-67 percent proficient or advanced levels for grades three through 10 in reading. Math scores ranged from 47 to 60 percent in the proficient or advanced levels. While scores in both areas are below the state averages for students without disabilities, it does demonstrate that students who are deaf or hard of hearing read with varied levels of independence across the grade levels.

2005-06 WKCE Score Results Summary for Students Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

WKCE Results by Grade	4th	8th	10th
Number of Students Identified as Deaf or Hard of Hearing	100	99	98
Percentage Proficient or Advanced in Reading	64%	58%	49%
Percentage Proficient or Advanced in Math	60%	48%	49%

For More Information:

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and the Council on the Education of the Deaf. *Service Provision Under the IDEA—Part H, as Amended to Children Who Are Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Ages Birth to 36 Months*. 1993. Rockville, Md.

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. www.dpi.wi.gov/sped/hi_deaf.html

—Survey of Students Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. www.dpi.wi.gov/sped/hi_survey.html

Wisconsin Educational Services Program—Deaf and Hard of Hearing

In 2001, the Legislature created the Wisconsin Educational Services Program for Students Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (WESP-DHH). This program has two components: the Wisconsin School for the Deaf (WSD) and DPI's Outreach Program. The purpose of the legislation was to expand the services needed to support the educational needs of students who are deaf or hard of hearing statewide.

WESP-DHH Outreach Program

The WESP-DHH, a program of the DPI, established the Outreach Program with offices around the state. Its mission is to serve the educational needs of students who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind, their families and the professionals who work with these students. The program accepts referrals and provides consultation services to school districts, CESAs, Birth to 3 programs, and families regarding the specific needs of students in their program. Their services include student evaluation and assessment, written reports and recommendations, distribution of information, and training. Staff are available to participate in student Individualized Educational Plans (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). All consultative services are free.

Staff working for the Outreach Program specialize in a variety of areas related to working with children who have hearing loss. This includes working with children ages birth to six and their families, diagnostic and educational services for school age children, speech and language services, educational audiology services, sign communication, and working with children who are deaf-blind.

A Captioned Media Program (CMP) is one of the services of the Outreach Program. CMP lends free open-captioned movies and DVDs, and some streaming media to qualified individuals and agencies serving individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. The media is sent via U.S. mail. A limited number of titles are available in Spanish. This is part of a national lending program. These materials are listed on WISCAT and can be borrowed by public libraries if the library anticipates a child or adult who is deaf will be attending a program. Libraries must register to borrow the titles.

The Outreach Program offers in-home training services. The Deaf Mentor Program provides in-home training to families with young deaf and hard of hearing children in the areas of visual communication and sign language. Specifically trained deaf adults (Deaf Mentors) who are fluent in American Sign Language (ASL) guide parents on ways to encourage visual communication (e.g., eye contact) and sign language, as well as provide sign language instruction and role modeling. The mentors expose families to Deaf Culture and let them know about upcoming events in the Deaf Community. The mentors visit weekly and work with the child's educational team through Birth to 3 programs or the local school district. The Guide-by-Your-Side Program matches experienced parents who have a child with a hearing loss with parents who have recently found out their child is deaf or hard of hearing. These trained parent guides provide up to six hours of in-home support and information to new

families.

The Outreach Program also offers various training opportunities throughout the year for teachers of students who are deaf and hard of hearing, speech and language pathologists, and educational interpreters and audiologists. Upcoming events are announced on the Outreach Program's web site. The annual statewide Parent Conference for parents of children who are deaf and hard of hearing, or deaf-blind is hosted by the Outreach Program, as is a weekend program for Hispanic families and a Leadership Retreat for teens.

Distant Pals is a pen pal program sponsored by the Outreach Program for students who are deaf or hard of hearing in Kindergarten through grade 12. The program emphasizes literacy skills through letter writing and literacy-based activities and promotes appropriate social skills. Because many students are the only deaf or hard of hearing student in their school, Distant Pals tries to help the students understand that there are other students in the same situation in different areas of the state.

For More Information:

Wisconsin Educational Services Program for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (WESP-DHH).
www.wesp-dhh.wi.gov
Captioned Media Program. WESP-DHH.
www.wesp-dhh.wi.gov/cmp.htm
Deaf Mentor Project. WESP-DHH.
www.wesp-dhh.wi.gov/dmp.htm
Guide-by-Your-Side. WESP-DHH.
www.wesp-dhh.wi.gov/guide.htm

Wisconsin School for the Deaf (WSD)

The Wisconsin School for the Deaf in Delavan was established as a residential program in 1852 and currently provides education for students ages three to 21 who are deaf or hard of hearing, most of whom have more than one disability. Youth attend the school as day students if they live in the local area, or stay at the school during the week as resident students if they are not within a commuting distance. The school has dorms for resident students for which house parents provide round-the-clock supervision. Extra and co-curricular activities are offered. The school's Adaptive Education Program is recognized nationally as a leading program in deaf education for students with multiple disabilities.

In 2004-05, 50 students commuted and 93 stayed at the school during the week and went home on weekends. In the 2005-06 school year, students attending WSD came from 66 school districts and accounted for about 6.5 percent of all students in Wisconsin who are deaf. Another 2,265 students with a hearing loss attended local school districts. Teacher survey responses indicated approximately 37 percent of those students who attend school in their local districts, have additional disabilities. At WSD, 80 percent of the students have more than one disability.

The primary difference between the educational process at WSD and the experience in local school districts is that all classroom instruction and activities are conducted in sign language by the teachers and staff without the use of interpreters. All staff use sign language, including teaching assistants, office staff, nurses, house parents, and maintenance workers.

Parent surveys done since 2001, indicate high satisfaction levels with the overall school experience. The one area where parents would like more emphasis is on stronger transition skills helping students make realistic post-graduation career plans, assisting students in pursuing post secondary education, and developing independent living skills.

WSD has a summer program open to students who are deaf or hard of hearing throughout the state. Enrollment in 2006 was 163. Seventy percent of participating students attend local schools during the school year. Approximately 60 percent of these students are the only deaf or hard of hearing students in their school. The summer program is an opportunity for students from all over the state to interact with other students who share similar experiences and language use. Classes have included science themes, reading, sports camps, and driver's education.

For More Information:

Wisconsin School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.
www.wsd.k12.wi.us

Causes of Deafness

Hearing loss can be hereditary, the result of disease or trauma, long-term exposure to damaging noise, or a side-effect of medications. It can vary from mild to profound, which is a total loss of hearing. The incidence rate increases with age. Regardless of the cause of the hearing loss, how the person uses his hearing and ability to communicate can vary widely and is not solely dependent on the level or type of loss a person has. The majority of people who are deaf have some residual hearing. Heredity and genetic disorders are the most common causes of hearing loss and account for approximately 13 percent of all incidences. Bacterial meningitis is the leading cause of hearing loss after birth and accounts for 8.1 percent of all hearing loss incidences.

Otitis Media

One of the most common diseases of early childhood is otitis media, which means "fluid in the middle ear." The Clerc Center at Gallaudet University indicates it can cause a temporary hearing loss if mild and fluctuating, but can result in permanent hearing loss if frequent. It usually occurs before a child is two and almost two-thirds of all preschool children have at least one episode. The children most at risk of permanent hearing loss are the 12 percent who have six or more episodes before the age of six. It occurs more frequently among children who attend day care centers and those exposed to second-hand smoke. Chronic otitis media can result in language delays. The behavior of children with chronic otitis media and their ability to stay with a task can be inconsistent day to day, depending on their hearing that day. They may use gestures instead of words, or be more talkative on some days than others.

For More Information:

Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center at Gallaudet University. About Hearing Loss. http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/SupportServices/series/5001.html

—Some Facts about Otitis Media. http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/InfoToGo/468.pdf

Hearing Loss Caused by Noise

Excessive noise damages the hair-like cells in the inner ear, and if repeated frequently over a long period of time, the damage is almost always permanent. Doctors are seeing more teens with hearing loss than in the past, which they attribute in large part to teens listening to loud music in closed spaces such as in a car or when they use ear buds with personal listening devices.

The National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorder (NIDCD) indicates that three factors are involved with ear damage caused by excessive noise—how loud the noise is, how long a person is exposed to the noise, and how close the person is to the source of the noise. Noise louder than 85 decibels can cause gradual damage to ears especially if exposure lasts for one minute or longer on a regular basis. An extremely loud noise like that of a firecracker at close range, can cause immediate, permanent damage.

How Loud is Too Loud?

150	Firecrackers
120	Ambulance siren
110	Chainsaw, rock concert
105	MP3 at maximum level
100	Wood shop, snowmobile
95	Motorcycle
90	Power mower
85	Heavy city traffic
60	Normal conversation
40	Refrigerator humming
30	Whispered voice

from the NIDCD web site at www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/hearing/ruler.asp

NIDCD recommends wearing ear plugs when involved with loud activities of 110 decibels or more. Rock concerts average 140 decibels, so NIDCD recommends everyone wear earplugs at concerts and music venues that are loud.

Music is not the only source of loud noise that affects hearing. Younger children also are affected. The Sight and Hearing Association tests toys every year to identify those with potentially dangerous noise levels. There are standards for the loudness of toys, but they are voluntary. The association recommends parents listen to a toy before buying it, and put masking or packing tape over the speaker to reduce its volume.

For More Information:

Afshar, P. "Popular Electronics May Cause Hearing Loss, Experts Say." Newspapers in Education, *The Miami Herald,* April 2006.

Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center at Gallaudet University. "Noise and Hearing Loss." http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/InfoToGo/053.html

The National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders at the National Institutes of Health. *Have Wise Ears! For Life.* Bethesda, Md.: NIH Publication No. 00-4848. www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/hearing/wiseears.asp

Sight and Hearing Association. "Noisy Toys: Annoying or Harmful?" www.sightandhearing.org/news/sands/html_sands/nl_winter06.asp

Teens Health. "Hearing Impairment." http://kidshealth.org/teen/diseases_conditions/sight/hearing_impairment.html

Using Baby Signs with Infants and Toddlers Who have Normal Hearing

The Youth Services Section of the Wisconsin Library Association hosted a session on Baby Sign Language at the 2006 Spring Conference in Wisconsin Rapids. The presenter, Vicki Patterson with Sign 2 Me, Precious Signs, reported babies' receptive language (what they understand) develops in advance of their spoken language. In addition, babies motor development allows them to produce signs earlier than their physiological development

allows them to produce words. Therefore, it is not unusual for babies who are exposed to signs to produce signs for words before they are able to speak those words.

One advantage of baby signing is that it fosters development of the left brain, which is related to motor skills and space relationships. This tactile application of language follows the typical early childhood developmental stages of tactile skills, while at the same time builds expressive language skills. In addition, it can help reduce the frustration of some children when they want something but can't express themselves verbally. Use of sign language does not delay normal spoken language acquisition; in fact, it seems to speed up spoken communication. Some babies understand up to 20 words in sign language by the time they are eight to 12 months old.

Using signs can be beneficial when reading to young children. Signs can assist in maintaining attention to the book and the reader, as well as assisting in conveying the concepts that are being introduced.

Waukesha Federated Library System's Baby Sign Project

In 2006 Waukesha Federated Library System received an LSTA grant to introduce the use of baby sign to parents in the system area. The system collaborated with Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in southeast Wisconsin to provide instruction for parents. The Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing contacted their clients who had babies who were deaf and invited them to participate. The programs also were open to all other interested parents. The response to the project was excellent indicating strong interest by parents in learning baby sign.

The Reading Process for Children Who Are Deaf

Children born with a loss of hearing or who lose their hearing before they start to speak are most likely to experience delays in language and speech development. Those who lose their hearing after learning to speak often have an advantage in terms of language development. It is important to note that the clarity of a person's speech is not an indicator of their ability to hear. Some people with very intelligible speech do not have any usable hearing, although they may be able to lip-read in certain situations.

Hearing loss affects language development and therefore impacts learning and a child's ability to read independently with comprehension. During story times and group reading sessions in school, the child may appear distracted by the movements of others and sounds that are louder than the readers' voices. The child may not have the ability to discriminate important sounds from irrelevant ones. Often placing the child near the librarian or teacher where he can see the book, helps him focus. The child may want to touch the book, take long looks at pictures, and may benefit by having words pointed out by running a finger under them.

Communication and language are the foundations for learning. During the early years, children use their knowledge of language to learn to read. As they move through grades in school they are expected to use reading to learn. Knowledge of the world around them is very important to the process of applying previous knowledge to new material. This can be a challenge for children who are deaf or hard of hearing. They have many gaps in their general knowledge and use of everyday language due to gaps in their "incidental learning." Seventy-five percent of language development is the result of incidental learning. Children "over hear" language used by parents, peers, siblings, older family members, neighbors, and on television. Children who do not have access to this "over hearing" of language exchanges miss out on many natural opportunities to learn of the world around them.

Babies who are deaf and born to parents who are deaf are typically exposed to ASL as their first language at home. These children have the same level of exposure to language and knowledge of the world around them as do most children who can interact verbally with their families. Their skills allow them to use language to problem solve and interact with activities that involve higher level thinking skills when they start school. These babies learn ASL at the same rate and in somewhat the same way that babies who can hear acquire spoken language. Lynne Erting and Judy Pfau explained in their joint publication, *Becoming Bilingual: Facilitating English Literacy Development Using ASL in Preschool,* that fewer than 10 percent of preschool children who are deaf or hard of hearing are exposed to fluent ASL in the home.

The Clerc Center at Gallaudet University has a program called the Shared Reading Project that is designed to help hearing parents learn how to read to their deaf or hard of hearing child using basic American Sign Language, and to share books effectively. The program explains the importance of sharing books at a very early age with children who are deaf or who have a hearing loss. The program includes a series of videos and picture books. In the video, an adult reads a familiar story in sign language while using the book and demonstrates how to share it with a child. Research about reading to children who are deaf is included. The books and training video sets are available through the Clerc Center.

David Schleper reported on other techniques parents who are deaf use in his article, "Perspectives in Education and Deafness." These parents read the text in English and sign in American Sign Language, keeping both visible to the child at the same time. They elaborated on the text, added details, and pointed out elements

in the illustrations to help convey the meaning. They used the children's background experience to help them to relate to the story. They asked the children questions about the pictures. All of these techniques are encouraged in the process called "dialogical reading."

Often during the first reading, the parents gave more details than when they read the same story later. During each successive reading they moved closer and closer to the actual text. When these parents read, the focus was on reading for fun and to share their own love of books with their child. Information on the dialogical reading process is available on the web site of the Public Library Association in their "Every Child Ready to Read" program. It involves a child-led discussion of illustrations in a story and questions about what the child thinks will happen, how the characters feel, or how something in the story is related to the child's personal experience.

For More Information:

Erting, L., and J. Pfau. 1997-2002. *Becoming Bilingual: Facilitating English Literacy Development Using ASL in Preschool*. Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center. Washington DC: Gallaudet University.

Public Library Association. *Every Child Ready to Read*. Chicago: American Library Association. www.ala.org/ala/pla/plaissues/earlylit/earlyliteracy.htm

Lartz, M. N, and L.J. Kestubam. "Introducing Deaf Children to Literacy: What Deaf Mothers Can Teach Us." Paper presented at 56th Biennial Meeting in CAID, Baltimore, Md., 1993.

Schleper, D. R. "Reading to Deaf Children from Deaf Adults." In *Perspectives in Education and Deafness* 13:4, March/April 1995.

Barriers to Service

One of the biggest barriers that keeps people who are deaf from using public libraries is the language barrier. Typically public librarians do not use sign language, which is the preferred communication method for many people who are deaf.

Strategies for Success

Collaboration

Elements of collaboration are involved in all the strategies that help overcome barriers for youth who are deaf or hard of hearing. Librarians can get assistance from any of the following agencies and individuals who work with people who are deaf or hard of hearing:

- the parents of the child who is deaf or hard of hearing
- teachers of students who are deaf or hard of hearing in the local school district
- Wisconsin School for the Deaf
- Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing regional coordinators
- Wisconsin Association of the Deaf
- Outreach Program from the Wisconsin Educational Services Program for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, with offices around the state and including the DPI
- Wisconsin Sound Beginnings, within the Department of Health and Family Services (infants and preschool children)

Aram Public Library in Delavan Works with Students Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

The Wisconsin School for the Deaf is located in Delavan and sometimes families move into the area to assure their child can attend the school without commuting. The Aram Public Library in Delavan works frequently with students from the school.

On occasion teachers from the school bring classes to the public library to introduce them to public library services. Sometimes the speech of the students is hard to understand, but the problem can usually be resolved by asking the student to repeat what they said. The library also has a number of parents who are deaf who come to the library with their children.

If a library is just starting to offer services to the deaf community, the advocates contacted for the Adults with Special Needs Project suggested one way to generate interest would be to offer a series of presentations on various aspects of deafness and community services in collaboration with the Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) and the Association of Deaf Parent organizations. These agencies could help assure promotional materials reach their clients.

Planning

The Library Services to the Deaf Forum, a unit of the Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASCLA) within the ALA has a publication that may help libraries plan services for people who are deaf titled *Guidelines for Library and Information Services for the American Deaf Community.*

Any planning process targeting the needs of people who are deaf or hard of hearing should include arrangements for the services of a sign-language interpreter, assistive listening devices, and perhaps transcription services. The process should be sensitive to both people who perceive deafness as a cultural group and those

who do not identify themselves as belonging to the deaf community. The process should demonstrate the understanding that the needs of both groups are very different.

Staff Training

Staff should feel comfortable knowing how to approach and communicate with people who have a hearing loss or are deaf. Communication tips are included at the end of this chapter. Staff should be aware that often adults who are deaf will prefer to communicate in writing, but their sentence structure may not be in standard English because it is a second language for them.

It is important that librarians understand the basics of speech reading, often called lip-reading. Speech reading, the combination of lip-reading and use of whatever hearing the person has, is a skill that develops over time and with experience. It is a skill or talent sometimes compared to singing. Some are born with the talent and others never become efficient lip-readers even with instruction and practice. Only 40 percent of English is visible on the lips because some sounds are formed using the throat or nose. The ability to lip-read is not an indication of intelligence. Knowledge of the spoken language contributes to understanding the context of the conversation needed to lip-read effectively. Sudden changes in topic can cause confusion.

Librarians should be familiar with basic communication tools that are helpful to people who are deaf and hard of hearing, such as hand-held amplifiers, microphones, and sound systems. They should see the equipment demonstrated and have an opportunity to practice using them. Staff should also be trained to receive and make calls using the Relay System and the phone number should be readily available at service desks. Staff should know how to use a TTY (Teletype) telephone device, if the library has one, and the Wisconsin Relay System, although other technologies such as text messaging and email are rapidly replacing TTYs.

Staff who schedule meetings should be familiar with the library's procedure for scheduling a sign language interpreter and the agencies that provide interpreter services. Due to high demand and the insufficient number of interpreters available, libraries should allow three weeks notice for the agencies.

Diversified Collections and Services

The advocates contacted for the DPI's *Adults with Special Needs* publication suggested that the library develop a very simplified version of written library rules and procedures that can be used by all patrons who do not use English as their first language. This can extend to instructions for procedures such as signing up to use a computer or a story time. The wording should use very basic sentence structure and simplified language.

Materials of special interest to people who are deaf might include an up-to-date collection in print and other formats on deafness and deaf culture. Closed captioned videos and videos that have a picture within-a-picture format of someone signing the spoken parts would be useful, as well as videos that teach sign language, or teach parents how to share books with their children who are deaf. Specialized videos should be labeled to identify their features and to make them easy to find on the shelf or when using an online public access catalog.

Subscriptions to *HiP* magazine for teens or to *Odyssey* for children who are deaf or hard of hearing might help connect these youth with others who share similar experiences. If the library circulates educational toys, the inclusion of toys that light up or vibrate would be good choices for children who have a hearing loss. The National Lekotek Center creates an annual list of toys that are good for children with special needs including those who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Older parents and grandparents who are deaf may not have computers in their homes. Computer classes for these adults could be a needed service. However, this is changing as more people who have a hearing loss learn to use computers as part of the educational process.

Adapting Story Times for Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Hold programs in a location other than the main area of the children's section to help cut down on background noise and other distractions. A room reserved just for story times is ideal. Use a circle or semi-circle seating arrangement so the child who is deaf can see the other children when they are talking.

Be proactive in introducing children who are deaf to the rest of the group. Ask the parent to help explain what the child can do, what limitations there are if any, and how best to communicate. Answer questions the children might have, including what a cochlear implant is and what it does if the child uses one. Teach the other children in the program appropriate ways to get the child's attention when they want to talk to her. Use activities that require children to interact with each other by doing things with a partner. This encourages interaction and acceptance between the child who is deaf and the other children. Remember that a child who uses ASL can't communicate while holding hands.

Place children who have a hearing loss close to the librarian who is reading, but not so close that looking at the reader's face is difficult. It helps children to see speakers' lips. It can help if women wear lipstick and men trim mustache or beard hair that covers the lips. Look directly at a child who is deaf to signal his turn to answer a question or participate, or tap the child on the arm or shoulder to get his attention, but avoid touching the child's face or turning the child's head. Point out when other children are talking so the child who is deaf can identify the speaker. Give the child time to locate the speaker and to try to follow what the other children are saying. Repeat conversation when that is helpful. Use more facial animation and gestures than usual, pantomime story action, and encourage all the children to join the pantomime.

Librarians who do story times can learn at least some signs and incorporate them into their sessions even if there are not children who are deaf in the audience. When children who are deaf do attend, the librarian can look up a few key words or character names and sign just those few signs while reading the story. Knowledge of a few signs does not make the program accessible to children who use ASL to communicate. An interpreter is needed to make the entire program accessible. Youth services staff should attend training on the use of baby sign language and teach some of the basic techniques and words during programs for infants and toddlers.

Include games that involve touching. Use pictures, puppets, models, toys, real objects, and videos to help children follow the basic story line. Let the children touch and explore the items as appropriate. Point to the pictures, allow the child time to focus on the pictures and then re-direct the child's attention back to the librarian or interpreter. Wear a flannel apron instead of using a flannel board because it is easier for a young child to see the speaker's mouth and the objects on the flannel board at the same time if they are close together, rather than turning her head back and forth from a flannel board to the speaker's face. Keep all visuals as close as possible.

Some children may need the librarian or presenter to wear an FM system, which is a special voice amplifier, around her neck that amplifies sound for that individual child. Cooperate willingly when this type of request is made.

Make arrangements for all age-appropriate programs to be interpreted automatically in sign language if a child comes frequently to a program series such as a story time, or as requested.

Hire performers who use sign language in their programs.

Learn to sign the child's name in sign language, as well as hello, good-bye, please, thank you, come, and other key conversational phrases to help create a welcoming environment for the child. Teach some of these to the other children in the program, especially the child's name. Incorporate baby sign language into programs for infants and toddlers or offer training for parents on the technique. Purchase some of the Shared Reading training videos from Gallaudet University and use them to learn techniques on incorporating at least a few key words in sign language for stories, songs, and finger plays used at story times. Teach the signs to all the children.

LSTA Grant Purchased Transcription Software in Menomonie

In 2005 the Menomonie Public Library received Library Services and Technology Act funding to extend their services to people who were deaf or hard of hearing. The library used the funding to purchase a sound system for its meeting room and included a "loop system." The system connects a microphone with individual receivers. People who need sound amplified during meetings or programs pick up a receiver and use an earplug or earphones to listen to the speaker. The device also can be used by some people who wear a hearing aid, because it can be connected right to the aid.

The library also purchased captioning software called "Dragon Naturally Speaking." This software automatically translates what a speaker is saying to text that can be projected onto a screen. The software does require that the speaker come and work with the software in advance of the meeting to acclimate it to the speaker's voice. The software works best with people who have fairly loud voices, clear articulation, and consistent pronunciation. Proper names often have to be typed in manually. The software is not perfect, but once the software recognizes the speaker's voice and speaking patterns, it is fairly accurate and correctly translates most of what the speaker says. Many people in large groups find the transcription of what the speaker is saying very helpful, even if they do not have a hearing loss.

Adaptive Technologies

Often web developers do not take into account that people who are deaf can't access information in video clips, voiced information, and multimedia content unless the video clips and audio segments are captioned. The tools to caption web video and run the printed text of spoken information have existed for decades. Public library web designers should assure that when they use video clips they are captioned or that a captioned version is an option. If public libraries have narrated segments on their web pages, they should assure that a written script of the text is available.

Library programs should be held in rooms with good acoustics. Make use of a microphone a standard procedure at library programs and meetings. Most people who are hard of hearing need only the amplification of a microphone to help them hear what is being said. This is an example of a universal accommodation that may benefit a great many people, beyond those who have a hearing loss.

One more advanced type of assistive communication device that is especially useful for meetings is transcription software. This software is keyed to a speaker's voice prior to a meeting or program and is used with a computer and data projector. As the person speaks, a written transcription of what the speaker is saying is projected onto a screen or wall so people can read along if they can't catch everything the speaker is saying. The programs now available are not perfect, but they are fairly accurate. Captioning during a meeting can be done by hiring someone trained to take dictation, on the order of a court stenographer, but this transcription software once calibrated to the speaker, does not require anyone to input the text by typing. It is not easily used when multiple speakers are making presentations.

Modeling the use of adaptive equipment helps familiarize the public with the devices and makes it a normal part of everyday life. This helps raise community awareness of technologies that are available and promotes community acceptance of them.

Accessible Buildings, Equipment, and Outreach

One very simple, free way to help make using the library easier for people who are deaf is to create a routine closing procedure that involves flashing the lights when an announcement is made that the library is closing. This is a very common signal used by people who are deaf and they will know immediately that a verbal announcement is being made, and will be cued to find out what is happening. It is a good practice to flash the lights when making emergency announcements, or giving instructions during a tornado or fire. It gets the attention of all the patrons.

Marketing

Librarians can create a special needs section on their web site and include links for resources of interest to people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

School districts and teachers of children who are deaf may be very cooperative about sending information home with their students, although they can't share identification of the children with the public library. The Wisconsin Association of the Deaf and the ODHH are willing to post library information on their web pages and send out information in their newsletters about public library services. Local chapters may be able to send mail to their clients if the library provides the fliers and postage.

If parents of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing comes to the library with the child, staff could set up a process to routinely mail fliers to the families that are interested. Word-of-mouth is extremely important in the deaf community, so it is highly likely that if one child starts to attend programs regularly and the library makes a good effort of accommodating the child's needs, more families with deaf children will begin to attend library programs as well. Another marketing suggestion from the advocates was to have a booth at state conferences, conventions, and forums for deaf and hard of hearing people that are held in the local region. Libraries should assure that their web pages are designed to include text for all video clips or voiced information.

Getting Started with Little Money and Time: Serving Youth Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Collaboration

- Put informational brochures on the Wisconsin Educational Services Program for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Outreach Program and Gallaudet University in Washington DC in public information areas.
- Post a sign or brochures near the video collection explaining the Described Media Collection available free through the mail from the DPI Outreach Services for students who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Ask school or CESA staff to provide training on communication techniques when working with youth who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Planning

- Contact your local school district to find out how many students in the district are deaf or hard of hearing and talk with their teachers about their needs. See DPI web site at www2.dpi.state.wi.us/leareports/.
- Invite parents of children who are deaf or hard of hearing to give suggestions on how to meet the needs of their children when they are at the library.

Staff Training

- Establish a routine closing and emergency announcement procedures that includes flashing the lights before making a verbal announcement.
- Provide opportunities for staff to learn to provide training in simple words in American Sign Language—hello, thank you, good-by.
- Assure all staff know how the basics of using assistive equipment and devices, and the procedure for hiring an American Sign Language Interpreter.

Diversified Collections and Services

- Weed the collection of outdated materials on deafness and hearing loss and purchase new materials as part of the routine selection process.
- Routinely purchase closed captioned videos. There is no extra cost for getting videos with closed captioning, and the captioning will only show if the patrons activate the feature. Many seniors with mild hearing loss will appreciate having captioned videos, and patrons who do not use English as their first language may use them to help practice their English skills. Be sure to label videos that are captioned on the cases to make them easy to find on the shelf and in electronic catalogs.
- Purchase some of the *Shared Reading* materials from the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center at the University of Gallaudet. Information on them can be found at http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/. These sets have a paperback picture book and a video showing how to use sign language to read the book and activities to follow up on after the story.
- When hiring performers for special programs, consider hiring performers who use sign language as part of their program.
- Invite someone who uses or trains Hearing Ear Dogs in to demonstrate how the dogs help their owners.
- Have a demonstration of the various communication and altering devices used by people who are deaf or hard of hearing in the home to help them be aware of things at happening—vibrating alarm clocks, flashing lights instead of a doorbell.
- Borrow free captioned videos from the Outreach Captioned Media Program and show them in-house if there are children who are deaf who will attend the program.

Accessible Buildings, Equipment, and Outreach

- Become familiar with and use the Wisconsin Relay for the Deaf. Keep the number handy at the reference desk and make sure staff practice using the system.
- If the library owns a microphone and sound system, hook it up routinely for programs and meetings, including board meetings.

Marketing

- Include a phone number and instructions on how to request accommodations at the library in the service brochure and on all program and meeting notices and advertisements.
- Make contact with the local deaf community. Get on their mailing lists. Put their newsletter (usually free) with the periodicals or with community information fliers.
- Send library program and new material information to regional and local agencies that offer services for people who are deaf or hard of hearing and ask them to include the information in their agency newsletters for their clients.
- Ask local school district programs such as Birth to 3 and agencies that serve the deaf community and people who are deaf to help write promotional items targeting their students or clients and to forward program flyers to them.
- Set up links on the library's web page to web sites of agencies that serve people in the area who are deaf or have a hearing loss and to sites with information on related deafness and hard of hearing issues.

Observe These Awareness Events:

February

Kids E.N.T. (Ears, Nose, Throat) Month sponsored by the Medical College of Wisconsin www.mcw.edu/display/router.asp?docid=3894

May

Better Speech and Hearing Month sponsored by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and Council for Better Hearing and Speech www.asha.org

June/July

Deaf-blind Awareness Week sponsored by the Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-blind Youth and Adults www.helenkeller.org

September

National Deaf Awareness Month sponsored by the World Federation of the Deaf-blind www.deaf-blind.com and National Association of the Deaf (NAD) www.nad.org (always the last full week of September)

September

Deaf Awareness Week sponsored by the Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-blind Youth and Adults www.helenkeller.org, World Federation of the Deaf www.deaf-blind.com and the National Association of the Deaf www.nad.org

Arranging for a Sign Language Interpreter

The Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services maintains a current list of agencies that arrange for interpreters around the state. To locate the nearest agency go to: http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/sensory/interpreting/terpagencies.htm.

If requested, the library must provide a sign language interpreter for programs and meetings held at the library at no cost to the patron. This is required by the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act). In general, the library must provide an interpreter who meets the standards of the person making a request. It would not be appropriate to arrange for someone who finger spells or knows a few signs to interpret for an adult who is fluent. The person making the request can suggest a particular interpreter, but the library is not required to hire that particular person. It is not appropriate to expect a family member or friend to interpret for a child at a library program. Parents should not be expected to act as an interpreter and keep the child engaged in the program at the same time.

If the interpreter is needed for a child, a good place to start is the school district, or a larger school district in the area, to see if an educational interpreter, who is certified in sign language and currently signs for this child or other children in the district, is interested in working for the library, especially in the summer. This has worked out well for many public libraries.

Libraries that have children who are deaf attending programs frequently should consider having age-appropriate programs routinely signed without knowing if the child is coming or not. They can then notify other libraries in the area that their programs are signed, so that other libraries can promote the programs as well. Libraries in large cities may want to consider routinely offering one story time session that is always signed, so that community members can count on having an interpreter there. However, that does not preclude the need to provide an interpreter for different sessions if a request is made.

Some libraries have found that community service groups that have children with disabilities as their focus may be willing to help with the cost of sign language interpreters. In one community, a service club picked up the entire cost for several years to help the library provide an interpreter at programs for several children attending preschool story times and summer library programs.

Tips for Communicating with Youth Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

- Be sure the child knows someone is talking to him (touch his arm, say his name). Face the child, bend to the same level, look directly at the child when speaking, and stand close enough for her to see, and to hear the librarian, if the child has some hearing. If the child wears a hearing aid, do not try to talk into the ear piece or lean so close that he cannot see the speaker's face. Even a slight turn of the head can obscure a child's vision.
- Talk directly to the child and ask the child questions, even if a parent or sign language interpreter actually answers. Keep messages short and simple.
- Ordinarily, speak in a normal tone and volume (but if a little volume or projection will help, then adjust accordingly.)
- Use normal enunciation; do not shout. If the librarian is a fast talker, he should speak a little more slowly.
- Be sure the light is adequate and falls on librarian's face, not on the child's face.
- Give the child time to process information. If the child does not understand the first time, wait a few moments and then try to rephrase the statements (for example, "What is your address?" might become "Where do you live?"). Children who have a hearing loss may just be starting to learn to read lips, and even the best adult speech readers miss words. When appropriate, ask the children to repeat back what was said.
- Realize that the child may have special difficulty in groups or noisy places. Make an effort to include the child. If necessary, move to quieter surroundings. Perhaps in certain situations, the librarian may wish to take notes for the parent of the child.
- Librarians should avoid talking with gum or food in their mouths or covering their mouths with hands or other objects when talking. Other distracting factors can include beards and mustaches. Lipstick can help a child focus on the speaker's lips.
- Avoid talking while laughing. A laugh can diminish speech reading altogether.
- Be patient with children who have a hearing loss. Don't make the child feel "stupid" or "helpless" or that it is a bother to work with him (sometimes this is done unconsciously by tone of voice or expressions).
- The librarian should try to show more facial and body expressions than usual when speaking. It is not necessary to be a pantomime expert to do this.
- Know that a "nod and a smile" does not guarantee that the child understands all that you are saying.

Tips are based on those from the Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, and this version is slightly modified from the tips included in the 2003 edition of *Adults with Special Needs: A Resource and Planning Guide for Wisconsin Public Libraries.*

Resources

Periodicals

Deaf Life www.deaflife.com
Deaf Life is the most widely read deaf monthly magazine in U.S., published by the National Association of the Deaf (NAD).
DeafNation www.deafnation.com
DeafNation is a national newspaper for the Deaf community
Deaf Watch Newsletter and ***Silent49er News*** http://members.tripod.com/~deafwatch/deaf.htm
This personal news service created and managed by Richard Roehm includes an index.
Hearing Loss: The Journal of Self Help for Hard of Hearing People www.shhh.org
This bimonthly magazine is about hearing loss, published by Hearing Loss Association of America (Formerly SHHH).
HiP Magazine www.hipmag.org
HiP is a publication for children and teens who are deaf or hard of hearing, ages eight to 14, their parents, and teachers.
Odyssey http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/Odyssey/
Odyssey is a magazine for parents of children who are deaf, published by Gallaudet University.
World Around You http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/WorldAroundYou/index.html
This magazine is published five times a year for deaf and hard of hearing teenagers.

National Resources

About Deafness/Hard of Hearing http://deafness.about.com/mbody.htm
This web site includes an index to topics about deafness.
Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing www.agbell.org
This resource center is on hearing loss and spoken language approaches.
Hearing Dogs www.agbell.org/dhhs/resources/dogs.html
American Library Association. www.ala.org
Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASCLA) www.ala.org/ascla/
Guidelines for Library and Information Services for the American Deaf Community.
www.ala.org/ala/ascla/www.ala.org/ala/ascla/asclaprotools/asclastandards/standarsguidelelines.htm
Public Library Association www.ala.org/ala/pla/pla.htm
Every Child Ready to Read www.ala.org/ala/pla/plaissues/earlylit/earlyliteracy.htm
American Society for Deaf Children www.deafchildren.org
This is a parent-to-parent network with resource to help them raise children who are deaf or hard of hearing.
American Sign Language Access www.ASLAccess.org
American Sign Language Access is a source for videos in which the narration is both voiced and signed.
Captioned Media Program (CMP) www.cfv.or
CMP is a free lending service of open-captioned films, dvds, and streaming media to individuals who are deaf.
Closing the Gap www.closingthegap.com
This organization is a leader in adaptive technologies and sponsors an annual conference in Minneapolis.
Council for Exceptional Children www.cec.sped.org
The council is dedicated to improving educational outcomes for children with disabilities, includes a Division for Communicative Disabilities and Deafness (DCDD).
Deaf Mall www.deafmall.net
Deaf Mall offers gifts and information on events, travel, interpreters, and technology for people who are deaf.
DeafZone www.deafzone.com
Deaf Zone has numerous links to resources for people who are deaf.
Gallaudet University www.gallaudet.edu
Galludet is the only liberal arts university in the world designed exclusively for deaf and hard of hearing students.
Communicating in the Library with People Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing
http://library.gallaudet.edu/dr/librarian-communication.html.
Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu
The center is a part of Gallaudet University that works to improve the quality of education for students who are deaf.
A Good Start: Suggestions for Visual Conversations with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Babies and Toddlers.
http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/KidsWorldDeafNet/e-docs/visual-conversations/section-1.html
Info to Go http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/infotogo/
Performance Groups http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/InfoToGo/477.html
Shared Reading Project http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/Literacy/srp/index.html
Hands and Voices www.handsandvoices.org
Hands and Voices is a parent support organization striving to help children who are deaf and hard of hearing reach their full potential.
Hearing Loss Association of America (Formerly SHHH) www.shhh.org
This is a consumer and educational organization devoted to the welfare and interests of those who cannot hear well.
Hearing Loss: The Journal of Self Help for Hard of Hearing People www.shhh.org

Lekotek National Center www.lekotek.org
Lekotek National Center is a national resource on toys and play for children with special needs.
Able Play Toy Guide www.ableplay.org/search.asp.
Toys R Us Toy Guide for Differently Abled Kids www.lekotek.org/services/toyind/toysrus.html
National Association of the Deaf (NAD) www.nad.org
NAD offers advocacy, captioned media, information, legal assistance, policy development, and research.
Captioned Media Program (administered by NAD) www.cfv.org/about.asp
The Captioned Media Program provides free captioned videos by mail, including to public libraries.
National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY) www.nichcy.org
This is a clearinghouse on disabilities and related issues involving children birth to age 22.
National Institute on Deafness and Hard of Hearing (NIDCD) www.nidcd.nih.gov
The Institute strives to improve the lives of people with communication disorders.
National Friends of Libraries for Deaf Action (FOLDA) www.folda.net
FOLDA publishes a resource for public libraries called "The Red Notebook" on serving people who are deaf.
Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc. (RID) www.rid.org
RID is a national organization that certifies interpreters and created a Code of Ethics for them.
Self Help for Hard of Hearing People (SHHH) See Hearing Loss Association of America
Utah State University www.usu.edu
National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management www.infanthearing.org
Universal Newborn Hearing Screening *Fact Sheet.* www.infanthearing.org/summary/index.html
Web Accessibility in Mind (Webaim), Utah State University, Center for Persons with Disabilities www.webaim.org/articles/
Webaim provides information on Deaf Culture and the strong sense of community among people who use sign language.

Wisconsin Resources

Camp Winnebago www.campwinnebago.org
This camp is designed for people with cognitive disabilities and is located in Caledonia, Minnesota.
Center for Deaf-blind www.deaf-blind.org
Located in Milwaukee, this center offers services to people who are deaf-blind.
Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing www.cdhh.org
This center serves the Milwaukee area and provides rehabilitation services, speech and language therapy, audiology services, independent living services, and a parent-child program for people who are deaf.
WI Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Professional Association (WSHA-P) www.wisha.org
WSHA-P serves Wisconsin's audiologists and speech-language pathologists and has information for the public.
Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative (WATI) www.wati.org
WATI is a statewide project to make assistive technology and services more available to children with disabilities.
Wisconsin Association of the Deaf (WAD) www.wi-deaf.org
WAD ensures a comprehensive and coordinated system of resources is accessible to Wisconsin people who are deaf.
Wisconsin Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing www.dhhcouncil.state.wi.us
The council is advisory to the Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.
Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov
DHFS coordinates social services for people who are deaf and hard of hearing.
Interpreters' Directory http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/sensory/Interpreting/InterpretingFP.htm
Newborn Screening in Wisconsin http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/DPH_BFCH/Newborn_Screen/index.htm
Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov
ODHH provides information and referral services, support to individuals and service providers and training. ODHH manages a Telecommunications Assistance Program, certification in Communication and Sign Language areas, and publishes a newsletter. The office also maintains a contact list of sign language interpreters.
ODHH regional offices:
Northern Region www.dhfs.state.wi.us/sensory/Staff/NRO.htm
Counties**:** Adams, Ashland, Florence, Forest, Iron, Juneau, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Marquette, Oneida, Portage, Price, Taylor, Vilas, Waushara, and Wood.
Northeastern Region www.dhfs.state.wi.us/sensory/Staff/ERO.htm
Counties: Brown, Calumet, Dodge, Door, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette, Menomonie, Oconto, Outagamie, Ozaukee, Shawano, Sheboygan, Washington, Waupaca, Winnebago.
Southern Region www.dhfs.state.wi.us/sensory/Staff/SRO.htm
Counties**:** Columbia, Dane, Grant, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, La Fayette, Richland, Rock, Sauk, Walworth.
Southeastern Region www.dhfs.state.wi.us/sensory/Staff/SERO.htm
Counties: Kenosha, Milwaukee, Racine, Waukesha.
Western Region www.dhfs.state.wi.us/sensory/Staff/wro.htm
Counties: Bayfield, Barron, Buffalo, Burnett, Clark Chippewa, Crawford, Douglas, Dunn, Eau Claire, Jackson, LaCrosse, Monroe, Pierce, Pepin, Polk, Rusk, St. Croix, Sawyer, Trempealeau, Vernon, Washburn.
Real Time Captioning Service www.dhfs.state.wi.us/sensory/RTC/rtcfrontpage.HTM

Wisconsin Interpreter Referral Agencies http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/sensory/interpreting/terpagencies.htm
This referral service identifies interpreting agencies in Appleton, Brookfield, Coulee, Delavan, Greenfield, Manitowoc, Menasha, and Milwaukee.
Wisconsin Sound Beginnings http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/DPH_BFCH/cshcn/sndBegning.htm

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction http://dpi.wi.gov
DPI coordinates social services for people who are deaf and hard of hearing.
Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA) http://dpi.wi.gov/cesa.html
IDEA Child Count http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/cc-12-1-05.html
This is a child count for state special education by category.
List of Wisconsin and Neighboring Interpreter Preparation Programs
http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/bul99-04.html
Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing www.dpi.state.wi.us/sped/hi_deaf.html
This program provides supervisory and consultations services to local educational agencies and private schools.
Special Education Team www.dpi.state.wi.us/sped/
Special Education Subjects Reference: Educational Interpreting www.dpi.state.wi.us/sped/sbinterpret.html
State Superintendent's Advisory Council on Deaf/Hard of Hearing Programs
www.dpi.state.wi.us/sped/hi_advisory.html
Special Education Reports www2.dpi.state.wi.us/leareports/
The reports include district counts of children in special education categories.

Wisconsin Educational Services Program for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (WESP-DHH)
www.wesp-dhh.wi.gov
Captioned Media Program www.wesp-dhh.wi.gov/cmp.htm
This service is part of a national organization that lends free captioned media to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, their families, and agencies that serve them, including public libraries.
Outreach Program www.wesp-dhh.wi.gov/
The Outreach Program is a component of the Wisconsin Educational Services Program for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing with offices throughout the state, including Delevan and at the DPI. The program offers support and resources to educational agencies and individual families who have a child who is deaf through age six.
Captioned Media Program www.wesp-dhh.wi.gov/cmp.htm
Deaf Mentor Program www.wesp-dhh.wi.gov/dmp.htm
Events www.wesp-dhh.wi.gov/events.asp
Guide-by-Your-Side www.wesp-dhh.wi.gov/guide.htm
Programs www.wesp-dhh.wi.gov/programs.htm
Services www.wesp-dhh.wi.gov/services.htm
Wisconsin School for the Deaf www.wsd.k12.wi.us
This is a state-managed residential school for children who are deaf and hard of hearing located in Delavan.

Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development www.dwd.state.wi.us
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) www.dwd.state.wi.us/dvr/
DVR helps obtain employment for people with all types of disabilities.

Wisconsin Hispanic Association of the Deaf (WHAD)/El Asociación de los Sordos Hispanos en Wisconsin
www.geocities.com/Heartland/Ranch/6142/whad.html
WHAD serves Hispanic residents who are deaf in Wisconsin.

Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative (WATI) www.wati.org
Independent Living Centers offer an array of services including lending assistive technology devices.

Wisconsin Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (WisRID) www.wisrid.org
The goal of the registry is to further the profession of interpretation of American Sign Language.

Wisconsin State Association, Hearing Loss Association of America www.wi-shhh.org
The association creates awareness of hearing loss within Wisconsin through awareness, education, and self-help.